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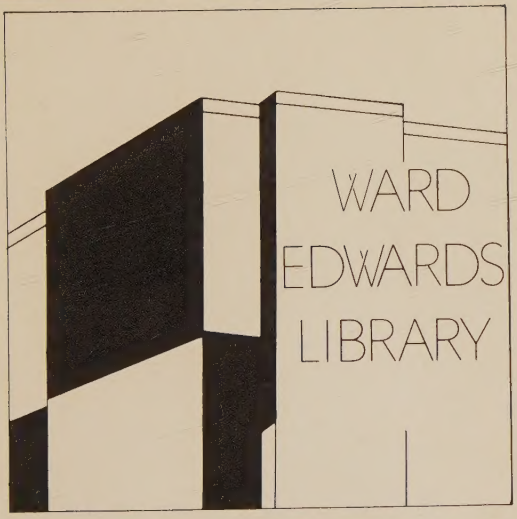
Flexner, Abraham



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DO AMERICANS REALLY VALUE EDUCATION?

BY

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

CENTRAL MISSOURI
STATE UNIVERSITY
Warrensburg,
Missouri

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THE INGLIS LECTURESHIP

To honor the memory of Alexander Inglis, 1879–1924, his friends and colleagues gave to the Graduate School of Education, Harvard University, a fund for the maintenance of a Lectureship in Secondary Education. To the study of problems in this field Professor Inglis devoted his professional career, leaving as a precious heritage to his co-workers the example of his industry, intellectual integrity, human sympathy, and social vision. It is the purpose of the Lectureship to perpetuate the spirit of his labors and contribute to the solution of problems in the field of his interest. The lectures on this foundation are published annually by the School.

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DO AMERICANS REALLY VALUE EDUCATION?

DO Americans really value education? I rather think that most people will hold that the answer is so obvious that the question practically answers itself. Of course we value education. Is n't the age of compulsory attendance at school higher than in any other country on earth? Is n't illiteracy among American-born whites almost practically unknown? Have n't high schools and colleges, which do not come under the compulsory law, multiplied spontaneously beyond anything that exists anywhere else? Has n't the attendance at these high schools and colleges, again entirely voluntary, increased by leaps and bounds, so that they cannot be built fast enough to receive the crowds that throng into them? Is n't more

money raised in the United States for educational purposes by voluntary subscription than in any other country on the globe? Isn't there a more active, persistent, and successful campaign for new facilities — laboratories, libraries, and dormitories — than ever before or than anywhere else?

All these questions must be answered in the affirmative. The age of compulsory attendance in almost all sections of the country is higher than in any other country. Illiteracy among American-born whites is, with limited exceptions, unknown. High schools and colleges have been built with absolutely unprecedented rapidity, and their enrollment far outruns the attendance in secondary schools and colleges in any other country. More money is obtained by voluntary gifts than anywhere else. No improvement in respect to facilities has taken place in any other country, such

as is now taking place in America. Does America really value education? Of course it does; how can you ask?

Within the space of time allotted to me I cannot submit statistics or other evidence in proof of the assertions which I have just made, but I will take one instance, which is assuredly significant. In 1900, the endowment of all institutions of higher learning in the United States aggregated $177,127,965. Less than a quarter of a century later, in 1924, this sum had increased to $814,718,813 — practically 359 per cent. In the two-year period from 1922 to 1924, the endowment of these institutions had increased $115,505,361. That is, in two years these institutions had added to their resources 65 per cent of the total sum which they had amassed from the discovery of America by Columbus up to the year 1900. In the face of these startling figures, how can anyone raise a

question as to whether or not Americans nowadays value education?

On the side of attendance, college enrollment increased, between 1900 and 1924, 367 per cent, and the enrollment in graduate schools 394 per cent. If more persons attend colleges and universities, education must surely be valued. We shall see. Meanwhile, let me call attention at this point to the suspicious fact that attendance has increased rather faster than endowment!

I venture, however, to pursue this item a bit further. The total sum which I have mentioned, roughly $815,000,000, now held as endowment by institutions of higher learning in the United States, belongs almost wholly to 769 privately controlled institutions. Of these, 13 possess $10,000,000 or more; 124 possess from $1,000,000 to $10,000,000; 642 possess less than $1,000,000 each. It may be assumed that an endowed col-

lege which values education cannot operate even within a restricted scale on, let us say, less than $6,000,000 — any kind of university requires much more — though, to be sure, the amount required will in any case depend upon the scope of the institution, the number of its students, its income from fees, etc. But if it be true approximately that the sum of $6,000,000 furnishes a fairly safe basis upon which to begin modest operations within a limited sphere in the realm of higher education, there are in the United States just 20 institutions that might conceivably be said to be properly financed, if even they are; and, as we shall see, that "if" is a big "if." Of the 769 institutions with which we are dealing, 750 are, on the face of the papers, more or less poverty stricken.

Let me ask you at this point to suspend judgment for a while. I should not wish you to believe either that the less

well-endowed institutions attach less value to education or that the larger institutions do really value education. I wish only to make this clear: namely, that the startling figures which can be cited in support of the contention that America has shown appreciation of higher education through the amount of money latterly raised for the purpose are by no means conclusive.

What do the statements which I have made above and the figures which I have just quoted really show? They show beyond doubt that we do in America attach enormous importance to what may be called educational spread; that we attach more importance to the mere diffusion of some kind of educational opportunity or other than does any other country. Quite obviously, the mere spread of educational opportunity is, in itself, a great thing, because it really does give an outlet for talent. If a really able and serious

boy or girl gets into ever so modest a high school or college, he is at any rate protected against the abrupt and premature termination of his chances for intellectual development, such as would be extremely apt to happen if, instead of going to his modest high school or college, he were apprenticed to a plumber or set to farming. A certain devotion to fairness can therefore be inferred from the mere abundance with which educational opportunities at every level are being provided in the United States; at least we do want every fellow to have a chance.

But what I have called the spread of educational opportunity, too often of inferior character, means something more than mere democratic fairness. It means, among other things, not that we value education, but that as a people we value the prolongation of youth. By lengthening the period of school attendance and by spreading educational opportunity,

we make way for the activities which are characteristic of the expansive physical and emotional sides of adolescence. Some of these activities are extremely wholesome, some are doubtful, a few at least are undesirable, not to say vicious. Wholesome, dubious, or unwholesome, the lengthening of the period of school and college attendance, the spread of educational opportunity over so large a portion of the population indicate that interests and activities not primarily intellectual in character — though, to some extent, socially and otherwise valuable — bulk large in the desire to remain at school. Abundance of opportunities to go to school and college can therefore be in part interpreted as meaning that we value comradeship, fun, sport; in a word — happiness, at an easy, unproductive, non-energized level; further, that we realize, as the English realize and the Continentals do not, that there are many

elements of first-rate importance to education beyond the merely intellectual. This conviction is, however, so general in both England and America that it may be safely ignored; there is no danger that these elements will be slighted or overlooked. One may, therefore, I think, infer from the facts (1) that we value the kind of fair play which gives every boy or girl, who has any ability at all, some chance at school through the adolescent period; (2) that we value literacy as against illiteracy; (3) that we value youth and hesitate to bring it to an early termination either by shunting boys and girls into deadening occupations or by subjecting them to serious intellectual effort as an essential part of the higher educational process; (4) that to some extent we value intelligence and training.

On this occasion I shall, in speaking of education, limit myself to the last factor — to the intellectual factor — something

very different from literacy, from going to school or college, or even obtaining a bachelor's degree. To my thinking, for us Americans, education ought at this moment to emphasize scholarship and the capacity for severe intellectual effort, for nothing else needs emphasizing. Do we Americans value scholarship in the sense in which I believe it can be fairly said that scholarship is valued and honored in certain other countries? Do we attach distinction to the capacity for severe intellectual application as such, quite apart from its material rewards and applications? In my opinion, both questions must at this moment be answered in the negative, rather than the affirmative, in so far as generalization is possible at all. When, therefore, I ask whether America really values education, I am, to be honest, asking whether America values scholarship and the capacity for severe and disinterested intellectual effort.

I venture to suggest two tests, by means of which we may form some notion (I say "notion," not "judgment," for I am aware of the fact that I am in the realm of opinion, not in the realm of evidence) I say, I venture to suggest two tests by means of which some notion can in a matter of this kind be formed: namely, (1) the esteem in which the scholar is held in America; (2) the pains which are — or are not — taken to surround the scholar with the conditions necessary in all but highly exceptional cases to scholarly and intellectual activity.

First, as to the degree of esteem in which the scholar is held: I possess, on this point no evidence — only straws that perhaps show which way the wind blows. Will anyone deny that the Scotch dominie is highly esteemed? Will anyone who has walked behind a French or Scandinavian or German professor doubt that

he is surrounded with something faintly resembling "the divinity that doth hedge a king"? I should not try to show that there is any country in which, on a plebiscite, the scholar would be as highly ranked as the soldier or the statesman; but assuredly there are countries in which the teacher, even in the elementary and secondary school, is an authoritative person in the eyes of the family, and in which the title of professor commands respect from tutored and untutored alike — and America is not one of them. I shall not try to explain why this is so. The reasons are easily found. I am concerned only to get the fact recognized and admitted, if fact it be. And, as I see it, the fact is this: that there are countries in which the teacher, elementary and secondary, occupies a strong position, because he is as such esteemed; just as there are countries in which the professor is as respectable as a judge or

a general — and America is, in my judgment, not in the list.

I can make the point clearer by a contrast within the university. University and college administrators and executives in America are, I should say, esteemed. It is, in other words, quite generally regarded as a great achievement to have reached the presidency of a college or a university — an achievement out of all proportion to the distinction involved in being a professor of Greek or Latin or physics or English. Now, as a matter of fact, a public with a real sense of values would attach distinction not to the executive as such, whose business — very important, to be sure — is so largely of a ministerial character, but to the scholars who actually constitute the university — scholars, I may add, one of whom the president might well be, and sometimes is.

Let me, in passing, guard against a

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possible misapprehension. The professors are, I say, the university, and whatsoever esteem attaches to university position should attach to them. They are the university. But I hope I may not, because of this statement, be quoted as *for* — or, for the matter of that, *against* — what is commonly called "faculty government." That is a complicated question, the pro's and con's of which have no necessary connection with our present topic. At this moment, I am merely saying that, as an answer to the question, "Are scholars esteemed in America?" it is not irrelevant to point out that, while college and university presidents rank in public esteem and in the esteem of the educated with bank presidents and railroad presidents and great lawyers, and therefore figure as prominent personages in the management of public enterprises of great significance, university professors are gen-

erally unknown to the public and with few exceptions do not participate in such enterprises, except in so far as they may be called upon in an expert capacity to advise in technical matters. I do not believe that this discrimination is due to the fact that people want to save the time and energy of the professor for his scholarly work, while they feel no such compunction in respect to the time and energy of the college executive, for we shall see in a moment just how much is done to save the time and strength of the professor for his own proper task. The explanation lies elsewhere. The executive is valued because the American loves administration and organization and esteems highly those charged with responsibility for it, whereas he gives less recognition to superior intellectual achievement.

I mentioned a second test: if we valued education in the highest sense of

the term, we should naturally create conditions favorable to it. We do value ability in law, in medicine, in corporation administration, and there are no lengths to which we will not go and no sacrifices which we will not make (1) to attract able men into these posts and (2) to make it possible for them to be effective. We pay the best of them high fees and salaries. We give them every variety of clerical, secretarial, and mechanical help. We render them all possible deference — do everything, in fact, to show that we value what the best can do; and that, valuing them, we manage to obtain for them the means, and to create for them the conditions, of procuring through success all the genuinely good things of life — leisure, music, books, art, comfort, travel, etc.

If the American people or even that small section of the American people which is interested in education attached

a proper value to scholarship, we should ask ourselves, in the first place, what are the things that a scholar needs, if he is to be scholarly. I rule out at once worldly distraction. The remuneration and the associations which would lead to feverish social activity would be no proof that we value scholarship; it might rather be a proof that we are bent upon destroying it. But in ruling out worldliness, let us not make the mistake of regarding scholars as dehumanized creatures, with no passions, interests, or needs outside of laboratory or library. To be sure, there are, and from time to time will be, Herbert Spencers, who are as human as a time-clock or a cash register; or Claude Bernards, who can pursue their philosophical and experimental activities with tranquillity even though their consequent poverty alienates wife and children. But, by and large, scholars and scientists are human beings, with a fairly

human interest in a wife and a few children and with a natural ambition to give children some of the choice opportunities for cultivation. On the whole, one might even assume that scholarship and education are safer and saner with human than they might be with denatured scholars. In addition, then, to a serene domestic situation, the scholar needs leisure in which to work and to browse, facilities for the prosecution and publication of his researches, contacts with other scholars working in his own field, and reasonable opportunities through vacation and travel to stimulate and refresh his imagination. Mind you, the scholar is at best leading what may fairly be called an artificial life. To a biologically unjustified extent he is developing and exercising his intellectual and aesthetic rather than his physical resources. Though we are by nature doers rather than thinkers, the scholar is a thinking rather than a

doing person. It needs no particular stimulus or incentive to make doers, though it may require considerable incentive and training to make wise doers and efficient doers; it requires far more incentive and far more care in the maintenance of proper conditions to develop in their purer forms the highest intellectual capacities of selected groups of individuals.

A nation that really valued education would, I have said, in the first place esteem scholarship; and, in the second, it would seek somewhere and somehow to produce and maintain conditions favorable to scholarship.

How much do we now actually do to attract into intellectual posts the considerable body of men and women that so large a nation requires; and how much do we do to create the conditions in which these men may realize their potentialities?

Let us first look at the conditions of intellectual activity within the academic institutions of the United States. How many professors of Latin or Greek or Sanskrit or physics or English are favorably circumstanced for the development of the subjects to which they give their lives? You, who are in closer touch with academic institutions than I, will realize at once our general backwardness. To be sure, here and there you will find an individual who has contrived to secure for himself favorable terms and conditions. But on the whole, the burden of teaching huge armies of more or less unprepared undergraduate students used to and still demanding spoon-feeding; the further burden of teaching in much the same spirit the rapidly increasing number of candidates for the M.A. degree, which is only a somewhat sublimated B.A. degree; the committee burden; the administrative burden — all

these and other burdens leave little time or strength for the pursuit of severe intellectual effort. Furthermore, few indeed are the institutions which through adequate libraries or laboratories provide for scholars adequate opportunity to undertake large intellectual enterprises. Finally, the opportunities for the publication of the results of large scale intellectual undertakings are in this country so limited that the fate of a great manuscript may be the drawer of a desk in which it can grow obsolete in quiet.

Now, I am anxious to be fair. Before proceeding therefore to the next point, let me say that, as far as I am in a position to judge, faculties are themselves in a measure responsible for some of the burdens which they bear and of which they complain. College students are, to be sure, immature and unprepared; well, exert yourselves as you will, your efforts will not educate them. Why not throw

the responsibility much more largely upon them and let them take the consequences? That is one way of reducing the burden, and incidentally, probably improving education. In even larger measure, the same process of devolution could assuredly be applied to the M.A. army. If a candidate for the Master's degree cannot make up his own deficiencies mainly by his own efforts; if, on the contrary, he has not only to be led, but to be fed, I suspect that his M.A.-ness will make little intellectual or cultural difference to him. A wholesome disregard on the teacher's part of the individual student's particular needs, a little less conscience and concern on the teacher's part — this again will diminish the burden and improve the quality of education. Finally, less enthusiasm for athletic fame, for committees, organization, colored cards, records, administration, and, in general, for that miscel-

laneous and expensive busying one's self with insignificant details which is commonly miscalled *democracy* or *efficiency* would spare the time and strength of the scholar for scholarship. I have said that our academic institutions are not yet equipped and maintained as they would be by a people who value education; and now, in fairness, I venture to add that faculties do not really in all respects manage them — such as they are — as faculties would, who really value education.

But the life of a scholar is not led simply in the university nor is it dependent solely upon the conditions within the university.

I come thus to what I regard as far the most important single factor in an admittedly complex situation. A nation that really values education will esteem educators and educated men; it will create conditions favorable to their work

within the university. Still more important, it will create tolerable conditions outside the university. A man will put up with drudgery, hard work, difficulty, if only, by the successful achievement of his duty, he is enabled to live; there is evidence enough to show that he will do so, whether enabled to live or not. In the last resort, however, if we really do value education, we will pay successful educators salaries that enable them to live decently, no matter how hard or under what difficulties they may be required to do their work. In fact, either set of facts may be efficacious: men with proper facilities and esteem may and do endure almost anything in order to be able to pursue an idea; men who enjoy some of the amenities of life may and do work under all manner of hardship. But a people that values education will pay decent regard to both factors.

Much of the attractiveness of the

scholar's life depends, therefore, upon what the university does to make his life bearable outside the university. There are indeed, as I have said, men who are so possessed of the scientific spirit that they will live on crusts and in a hovel, in order to carry on the quest for truth. But I need not say that no system of secondary or higher education can be organized upon the assumption that such men and women will be found in sufficient numbers to carry it on. For the most part, as I have already had occasion to say, scholars — like other people — are quite human. They are not unwilling to endure a severe ordeal in early manhood by way of demonstrating their fitness, and it is surely wholesome rather than unwholesome that selective self-denial and exertion should be required before prizes and opportunities are awarded. But once the ordeal has been successfully passed, the situation changes.

Scholars are not and ought not to be monks and nuns. They ought to be in a position to marry, to enjoy simple friendships, to raise at any rate small families in an atmosphere of culture and refinement, to enjoy some of the intellectual and aesthetic opportunities so freely open to the successful in other occupations. This is first and foremost a question of salary. I have said that the beginner may well endure hardship, for hardship is a sieve, but even with beginners hardship may be carried too far or may endure too long, in either of which events hardship deters many able men and women from entering the academic career and cripples them once they are in it. But still more serious are the limitations under which the mature and the successful now labor.

Six years ago, Mr. Trevor Arnett made an exhaustive study of academic salaries in the United States; his inquiry touched

the salaries of 8540 persons above the rank of assistant in approximately 250 institutions; of these, 6646 (practically 79 per cent) were then in receipt of salaries ranging from $901 to $3000 a year; 92 (something over 1 per cent) were receiving above $6000. The cost of living increased during the war years by something like 75 per cent or 80 per cent; salary increases made prior to 1920 ranged from 20 per cent to 35 per cent. "In very few instances," wrote Mr. Arnett in 1921, "do the increases granted, plus the increases proposed, even approximate the increase in the cost of living." Since that date the general situation has changed for the better — that is, the cost of living has fallen; academic salaries have risen. But it is clear that the academic teacher is not yet relatively as well off as he was before the war. There has been a slump in the standard of academic living — a slump

that affects not only beginners, but veterans — a slump that, unless corrected, menaces the quality of intellectual life. For, such has been the general prosperity of the country that there has been a marked rise in the scale of living — a rise of dubious moral or spiritual value. Thus, at a time when large sections of the population are living more decently, more comfortably, more humanly than ever before, the academic class not only does not share the advance — it is, relatively, less well off than it was in 1914. If therefore university salaries in 1914 were not sufficient to enable men to live a modest and tranquil scholarly life, still less are they capable of doing so to-day. I have before me a table exhibiting the salary schedule of one of the greatest and largest institutions in the United States. In the faculty of arts and sciences one man, and that a man of world-wide distinction,

receives the munificent sum of $10,000 a year. Other full professorial salaries range from $3,000 to $8,000. Associate professors receive for the most part something in the neighborhood of $4,000. Assistant professors receive for the most part something like $3,000, instructors something like $2,000. In other great institutions there are doubtless a few men who receive $10,000 or $12,000, but for the most part the conditions which prevail in the institution which I have cited prevail in all the large institutions, whereas in the less well-endowed institutions conditions are correspondingly worse.

What does this mean? It means, in the first place, that the domestic conditions under which scholars and scientists live, if they are actually dependent upon their academic remuneration, are fatal to the conditions under which normal men can live happy and tranquil lives.

In or near the great cities in which our universities are situated men who have attained eminence as scientists and scholars, who have the tastes and needs of educated men, who need a quiet nook in their own homes, and who desire to give civilized opportunities to wife and family, cannot attain these simple conditions on the highest academic salary paid in the United States. Now, mind you, the highest academic salary is paid to so few persons that for practical purposes they may be altogether omitted from consideration. Meanwhile, these men do as a matter of fact marry, have children, go away for a few weeks in the summer, and do other things that education is supposed to create a need and desire for. How do they manage? Quite variously.

A few of them possess independent means: excellent — for assuredly in a prosperous democracy it is greatly to be

desired that the able sons of the well-to-do be drained off into intellectual or artistic lives rather than be compelled to devote their talents to swelling fortunes that are already burdensome. One would feel a bit more hopeful of the future of an industrial state, if industry thus frequently and directly made the sort of contribution to academic life that the English aristocracy has long made to government. A few of them marry well-to-do and sometimes doubtless congenial wives. Thus their problem is solved — or perhaps sometimes complicated. But neither the well-to-do nor those who marry money (I did not say "for money") constitute a numerous class. There remains therefore the great army of academic teachers: on what do they live? Well, fare as they will, salaries do not suffice for legitimate needs. They are forced to earn more somehow. They become in effect part-timers. The

great majority of the academic profession of the richest country on earth cannot live on their salaries, even when they have reached the top; they are part-timers. I cannot over-stress this statement: college and university teachers are largely part-timers. To their proper business of teaching and to the passion for research which inspires the best of them, they can devote only the time that is left after carrying on their academic routine and after earning through lectures, summer work, popular writing, translating, expert service, the sums which they may need to balance the family budget, and, worse still, to carry on their scholarly and scientific research. Some of the most eminent and distinguished of American scholars are at this moment doing chores in order to finance research which will ultimately be pointed to as among the glories of American institutions of learning! How

far would the research laboratories of the General Electric Company get, if, on account of low salaries, investigators had to carry on side activities to make ends meet? Is railroading or business more voracious of time, energy, and thought than pure science or archaeology? Not one whit! What the former needs the latter needs and for the same reasons.

Mr. Graham Wallas has recently written an extraordinarily interesting and suggestive book entitled, "The Art of Thought." He describes the various external conditions which facilitate thinking or thoughtful effort. It is a striking fact that the conditions under which the academic life is lived in America run counter to the essential conditions which Mr. Wallas lays down. This does not mean that intellectual life does not exist in American institutions. It does mean that the conditions are unfavorable, that the obstacles are unnecessarily great,

and that the output must therefore be enormously less than might be.

In only one faculty of perhaps half a dozen universities, in so far as I know, has consideration of the difficulties of this problem been undertaken: namely, the medical faculty. The practice of medicine proved so distracting, so hostile to the type of application requisite for the prosecution of a high order of intellectual work, that extraordinary efforts have been made to provide salaries which will enable men of simple academic tastes to forego all other sources of income. Within the limits of its trial, the experiment appears to be succeeding. Fairly well-paid full-time posts are already sufficiently numerous to stimulate enlistment in the work of scientific medicine; the full-time clinicians are a favored group. Yet assuredly they are neither worldly nor spoiled; nor would anything but good result if the possibility of

equally high or even higher remuneration were extended to a very considerable number of posts throughout the entire faculty.

I say, advisedly, "a very considerable number of posts." I am not pleading for indiscriminate high returns. Most lawyers barely make a living; most doctors barely make a living; most merchants barely make a living. Why is it then that there is no difficulty about attracting into law, into the practice of medicine, into commercial enterprises, large numbers of able men? The answer is easy. While most men will either fail or make a merely tolerable success, there are prizes in plenty for those who make a real success. If a man succeeds in law, he need not worry. If he succeeds in medicine, he need not worry. If he succeeds in business of any type, he need not worry. If he succeeds in academic life, he may have to worry just as acutely as

if he had failed. It may be, of course, that many teachers are paid what they are worth; if so, well and good. It may be that some are paid more than they are worth. That is mistaken practice. I am pleading for those who are paid less than they are worth, on the ground that unless they are decently remunerated, they are wronged — and what is even worse — that academic life will certainly lose in competition with business, industry, law, and medicine.

I am not unaware, as I speak, stating mere facts as far as they go, that I am ignoring one consideration of tremendous, and fortunately hopeful, importance. I have, in a word, taken too little account of time and perspective. The academic teacher is to-day a part-time man — true; he does not earn a decent living — true; he works far too commonly under unhappy conditions at home or in the university, sometimes

both. But this is not the whole story. Let me make the point I have in mind by an *argumentum ad hominem*. Thirty-five years ago — and how brief a span is that in the history of nations, institutions and ideas — President Eliot established at Harvard the post of Assistant Professor of the History and Art of Education. It was tenanted by a young scholar who had had a characteristically creditable American career, in the course of which he had first been graduated from a normal school, next engaged in business, then through sheer ability, determination, and ripening scholarship fought his way up from the high-school ranks through various posts in university and normal-school life to the position to which he was called by Mr. Eliot. For years he ploughed a lonely furrow there. None the less before he retired from active service in 1921, he had the satisfaction of witnessing as the culmination of

his efforts the establishment of the Graduate School of Education, of which Alexander Inglis became one of the early and brilliant ornaments. I retract nothing that I have said. Yet, in this country, where higher and disinterested intellectual effort is not appreciated or properly conditioned and properly remunerated by a rich government, by a rich general public, and often not even by the rich small group responsible for educational policies, within a single generation an obscure half a chair was converted into a school where men interested in education can at least find congenial association and where educational problems can be seriously studied. Is it too much to hope that a second Hanus will, within the same span, do relatively as well?

The rise of the Harvard Graduate School of Education can be paralleled in many places. Medicine has risen to

academic status within the last fifteen or twenty years; the sciences have prospered; here and there is an oasis in which art or music or letters may thrive. It is all dreadfully inadequate and very, very spotty. Yet there is a profound difference between conditions, on the one hand, in which a man willing to make any sacrifice cannot find a foothold, and conditions, on the other, in which large numbers — in some fields amazingly large numbers — may find comradeship and achieve distinction, even though the sacrifice required is still unreasonable and unnecessary. There lies the difference between, let us say, 1880 and 1920: in 1880, no chance, no matter what you were willing to put up with; in 1920, chances rapidly multiplying, though attended everywhere by more or less deterrent and depressing conditions. If a close view of the facts depresses you — as it ought and as it often depresses me

— if your own daily experience causes you, as it often causes me, to wonder whether the game is worth the candle, there is comfort in the long view, which may, if we try, turn out to be the true view. The antidote to pessimism is President Eliot's little book called "Harvard Memories"; it will relieve none of you from the drudgery you endure to piece out your insufficient salaries; but it does report such progress as promises well for succeeding generations. And life being what it is, I daresay few of us at the end regret the hardships we have endured in the good cause. Meanwhile, let no administrator, living in comfort, seek to salve his conscience or excuse his inertia. I see no reason in the eternal constitution of things why presidents should be housed in comfort, while professors are cramped for space. For professors, as for presidents, idealism, as a permanent ration, is an unsatisfactory substitute for time and space.

I have spoken of deterrents unreasonable and unnecessary — deterrents to the academic career. A little while ago, I said that law and medicine and business need no artificial stimulants, though most lawyers and doctors and business men have a sorry time of it. But the point is that there are prizes enough to make the adventure tempting to the best brains in the world — prizes, in money, to be sure, but also in appreciation and opportunity. Corresponding prizes, if created in sufficient number, would transform the psychology of the academic world. No such financial remuneration as is to-day easily possible in law or business is requisite; a competence, if fairly abundant, with the assurance of the necessary working conditions and a decent provision for old age, would turn the trick. And now I come to the nub of the matter; no American university has yet concentrated its

efforts on the effort to solve in this way the most important problem affecting the integrity of the American university to-day. Efforts have been made to increase salaries, to be sure, but nowhere — as far as I know — on a sufficient scale or with proper concentration of purpose; moreover, this central problem has been complicated by efforts to raise money for a thousand other purposes, not infrequently of inferior importance and significance. If it can be truly said that America does not really and properly value education, it must also be said that America — confused by sudden emancipation from old-world habits and unexpected opportunities to get rich and have a good time — has not enjoyed efficient, intelligent, sure-sighted intellectual leadership from the only persons and the only institutions from which such leadership could possibly come. I am not afraid to express the conviction

that if the facts were told, if irrelevant efforts were excluded, if attention were focussed on the central problem, the problem could be measurably solved within a generation and that, in its solving, something would be done to teach America to value education.

I am keenly aware of the fact that in the brief period at my disposal, I have thus far quite ignored many important factors. For example; I have urged the importance of higher salaries. Do you note that I have carefully abstained from urging a higher salary *scale?* There is no scale in law, medicine, music, art; the ordinary doctor or executive fares ill; the unusual fare well. The moment a scale is employed the lower range becomes determinative. Salaries must somehow take account of individual merit. I am afraid that the academic body is in part responsible for the notion that length of service or title should de-

termine remuneration. I should, quite to the contrary, insist that individual merit must play much the same part as, on the whole, it plays elsewhere.

Again, I am not unaware of the extent of the financial burden which I am asking colleges and universities to assume — indeed, which I believe, they must assume. But I do not suggest that this burden can now, or ever, be carried out of the proceeds of endowment. To be sure, an educated man is a social asset; society can therefore be fairly asked to help pay for him. Increased, largely increased, endowments are therefore needed. But an educated man is also an asset unto himself — a cultural asset, an economic asset. He can, therefore, be fairly asked to help pay for himself, and not merely the bare cost of the teachers who teach him; for the research which creates the spirit of a modern university is also a factor in educating the under-

graduate student. Does the student, in college or subsequently, carry a fair share of this burden? I wonder! To be sure, the poor boy must not be shut out or discouraged; nor need he be. I raise the question as to whether by loans or deferred payments certain classes of students at least may not be fairly asked to contribute more than they now do to the solution of the problem.

I have spoken of the academic situation, but the Inglis lectureship was founded in memory of a fine and able man who devoted his life to secondary education. *Mutatis mutandis* — everything which I have said is equally, perhaps more, applicable to the field of secondary education. It is, as matters stand, no career for able, energetic, intellectual young men and women who make some demands and have every right to make some demands upon life. The routine work of secondary instruc-

tion is severe and cannot be otherwise; but, on the other hand, men and women cannot satisfy proper intellectual standards unless (1) they are held by the families of their pupils in proper esteem and (2) unless, if successful, they can look forward to the conditions in which they can be intellectually and otherwise kept alive. These conditions simply do not exist in the United States to-day. The secondary-school teacher is nobody. His salary is a pittance. It is needlessly and depressingly difficult for him to break out of the secondary school sphere into the collegiate or university sphere. Under such circumstances it is no wonder that men who have opportunities in the professions and in business are turning their backs upon the secondary school and that women who regard it as perhaps only a temporary occupation are more and more filling the faculties. Meanwhile, from the standpoint of general

education, the secondary school is the key. In every civilized country which excels at the top, the secondary school is strong. Germany, Scandinavia, and France — all of which value education — have taken good care to secure the proper underpinning. In America, the secondary school has spread like wild fire; but what is it? What is a type of school that includes at one end the rural high school with one or two teachers and a varied curriculum; and, at the other, the chaos of the big metropolitan high schools, aiming to serve every imaginable purpose — offering under one roof and often in the same classes in common subjects, scholarship to those so disposed, and typewriting, domestic science, and Heaven knows what to those who are marking time or restlessly awaiting the age at which they are eligible to go to work? Has there been improvement? Yes, to be sure! Can a serious boy

or girl get an education? Yes, to be sure! Is intelligent effort being applied to bring some sort of order out of chaos? Yes, to be sure! But, is there any fearless or adequate attempt to bring into secondary education the kind of talent or to create within secondary education the sort of conditions from which order can in a measurable lapse of time be expected? Not that I can make out. A people which values education will value the secondary school and will endeavor to bring into it a much larger proportion of the brains that now run to journalism, business, or law.

I confess myself one of the generation that believes in signs. It is difficult for me to believe that men value art or science unless they give some sign. And the converse is also true; where there is a sign, there is somewhere a reality. I take it therefore as a sign that some do value education, and secondary education at

that, when a conspicuous tribute is paid to a gallant scholar who gave his life that American boys and girls might be better equipped to enjoy larger opportunities. Alexander Inglis knew every phase of secondary education in almost every section of the country. He was a well-trained scholar before he turned his attention to general educational problems — something that is altogether too rare in this country. He had a clear head, an inventive brain, high purpose, great energy. Sooner or later, men like Inglis will make education understood, respected, valued. I count it a high distinction that those who knew him, lived with him and worked with him have permitted me on this occasion to honor his memory.

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